

Murfreesboro Police Department

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MPD receives NAMI Tennessee Criminal Justice Award

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. – The National Alliance on Mental Illness Tennessee (NAMI Tennessee), a member of the largest grassroots mental health organization, names the Murfreesboro Police Department (MPD) and Chief of Police Michael Bowen as one of two recipients of the 2020 Criminal Justice Award.

The Criminal Justice Award recognizes the criminal justice professional or program that most exemplifies the de-escalation and diversion approach promoted by NAMI for persons with mental illness who become involved in the criminal justice system. (Including law enforcement, justice, corrections, and other professionals in the criminal justice system.)

The award was presented at NAMI Tennessee 34th Annual State Virtual Convention Thursday afternoon, Sept. 24.

Twice a year, MPD hosts a 40-hour Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) Course where a significant number of MPD officers and Murfreesboro Emergency Communications Telecommunicators receive certification in CIT training.

The NAMI Tennessee Awards Committee chose the Murfreesboro Police Department for the award because of its commitment to mental health:

- MPD CIT Program established in 2010.
- Chief Michael Bowen promotes CIT programs in Murfreesboro and Rutherford County.
- Ongoing commitment to a vigorous community CIT program by assisting with training for more than 300 Officers with agencies statewide.
- Successfully promoted a change in their policy to reflect the CIT program, which changed the way officers respond to a mental health crisis.
- Certified CIT trainers have demonstrated the successful use of training in mental health crisis for recruits at the Tennessee Law Enforcement Training Academy.

This award is in honor of Tennessee's own Major Sam Cochran (ret.), father of the internationally recognized CIT program, the Memphis Police Department, and NAMI Memphis.

Madison County, Tennessee Sheriff John Mehr is the other 2020 NAMI Tennessee Criminal Justice Award recipient.

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About NAMI: [The National Alliance on Mental Illness](https://www.nami.org) is the *nation's* largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness. Join the conversation at [nami.org](https://www.nami.org) | [namitn.org](https://www.namitn.org) | [facebook.com/nami](https://www.facebook.com/nami) | [instagram.com/namicommunicate](https://www.instagram.com/namicommunicate) | [twitter.com/namicommunicate](https://www.twitter.com/namicommunicate) | #NotAlone